

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 278125

61
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/PAN:SMBELL
APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY
ARA-HWSHLAUDEMAN
S/AP - EBUNKER
S/S - MR. SEBASTIAN
DOD/ISA - ASST.SEC.MCAULLIFFE
DESIRED DISTRIBUTION
S/AB; ARA; INR; SECDEF; JCS; OSD/ISA; ARMY; CIA; WH FOR SCOWCROFT
----- 069911
O 112232Z NOV 76 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 278125

NODIS
FOR AMBASSADOR JORDEN FROM THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PN

SUBJECT: PANAMA BOMBINGS

REF; PANAMA 7680 AND 7681

1. IT APPEARS TO US THAT THE OBJECTIVES OF YOUR NOVEMBER 9 DEMARCHE HAVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED: TORRIJOS IS NOW ON NOTICE THAT HE DID NOT GET AWAY UNDETECTED WITH THE BOMBING EXERCISE, AND THAT FUTURE INVOLVEMENT BY THE NATIONAL GUARD IN BOMBINGS (OR OTHER SERIOUS PROVOCATIONS) WILL BRING DOWN UPON HIM THE GRAVEST CONSEQUENCES.

2. THESE, IN TURN, SERVE THE OBJECTIVE OF PROTECTING AMERICAN LIVES AND PROPERTY IN THE CANAL ZONE.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 278125

3. AS FOR HIS STRONG ADVERSE REACTION TO YOUR DEMARCHE,

WE COULD NOT HAVE EXPECTED ANYTHING ELSE. HE COULD NEITHER HAVE ADMITTED TO THE GUARD'S INVOLVEMENT NOR, IT FOLLOWS, GIVEN ANY ASSURANCES OF NO FUTURE INVOLVEMENT.

4. WE JUDGE THAT THE BEST COURSE FOR THE UNITED STATES IS TO LET THE MATTER REST WHERE IT IS. TO GIVE TORRIJOS ANY

DETAILS NOW FROM OUR INTELLIGENCE REPORTS WOULD (A) SURELY RESULT IN FURTHER DENIALS OF NATIONAL GUARD INVOLVEMENT, SO THAT THERE WOULD BE A STANDOFF, AND (B) PROVIDE TORRIJOS WITH ADDITIONAL GRIST FOR HIS PROPAGANDA MILL SHOULD HE DECIDE TO REVEAL YOUR DEMARCHE PUBLICLY.

5. OF COURSE, TORRIJOS MAY PREEMPT US FROM LETTING THE MATTER REST WHERE IT IS. BY GOING PUBLIC WITH YOUR DEMARCHE IN A DISTORTED FASHION, OR PERHAPS BY OTHER MEANS, HE COULD GO FAR TOWARD PRECIPITATING THE "MAJOR CRISIS" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WHICH BOYD POSED TO YOU AS A POSSIBILITY.

6. SUCH A CRISIS WOULD THEN BE PANAMA'S SOLE MAKING. TORRIJOS WOULD HAVE TO LIVE WITH THE CONSEQUENCES OF IT, WHICH AS YOU SUGGEST MIGHT WELL BE MORE SERIOUS FOR HIM THAN FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.

7. I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ARE INCLINED TO CONCUR IN THE FOREGOING COURSE OF ACTION. IF SO, AND IF A CRISIS IS NOT IMMEDIATELY PRECIPITATED BY PANAMA, WE ASK THAT YOU HOLD A FURTHER CONVERSATION AT ONCE WITH TORRIJOS ALONE - ACTING ON MY INSTRUCTIONS - IN WHICH YOU STATE THAT:

(A) YOUR PRESENTATION OF NOVEMBER 9 STANDS AS IT WAS MADE TO TORRIJOS AND BOYD...THAT THE UNITED STATES KNOWS VERY WELL WHEREOF IT SPOKE; HAVING CREDIBLE EVIDENCE;

(B) THE UNITED STATES DOES NOT INTEND TO PURSUE THE MATTER FURTHER...PROVIDING THERE ARE NO MORE "UNFORTUNATE" OCCURRENCES";

(C) THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, FOR ITS PART, WILL DO
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 278125

ITS UPMOST TO PREVENT THIS MATTER FROM BECOMING PUBLIC;

(D) THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WOULD DEPLORE THE "GRAVE CRISIS" WHICH BOYD POSED AS A POSSIBILITY; TRUSTS THAT PANAMA WOULD ALSO DEPLORE IT; AND ASSUMES PANAMA RECOGNIZES THAT

A PUBLIC AIRING OF THIS MATTER IN PANAMA WOULD GO FAR TOWARD

PRECIPITATING IT; AND

(E) THE UNITED STATES MUST FLATLY REJECT THE ALLEGATION THAT IT HAS BEEN SEEKING TO CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR PANAMA'S GOVERNMENT...HAD IT BEEN THUS INCLINED, IT WOULD NOT HAVE DESPATCHED ITS NEGOTIATORS TO PANAMA BEFORE OUR ELECTIONS IN RESPONSE TO THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT'S URGENT NEEDS.

8. AS FOR TORRIJO "GOING PUBLIC", WE UNDERSTAND THAT AS OF THIS AFTERNOON HE HAD NOT. BUT WE MUST CONSIDER THAT HE WILL BE UNABLE TO RESTRAIN HIMSELF FROM DOING SO, IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER, SOONER OR LATER. WE MUST CONSIDER THAT TORRIJOS WILL PERCEIVE (A) THE SHORT-TERM VALUE OF USING A DRAMATIC CONFRONTATION WITH THE UNITED STATES TO DIVERT ATTENTION AWAY FROM HIS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND HIS ERODING POLITICAL SUPPORT, AND (B) THE LONGER-TERM VALUE OF KEEPING DECENT RELATIONS WITH US IN ORDER TO OBTAIN A TREATY -- AND OPT IN FAVOR OF THE SHORT-TERM, NO MATTER HOW PERSUASIVE YOU ARE.

9. IF SO, SO BE IT. WE SHALL BE PREPARED TO COUNTER... WITH DEEP AND SINCERE REGRET.

10. WE UNDERSTAND YOU HAVE BEEN CONSULTING WITH GENERAL MCAULIFFE AND GOVERNOR PARKER ON THIS PRECARIOUS SITUATION AND WELCOME YOUR DOING SO. KISSINGER

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BOMBING, FOREIGN RELATIONS, PUBLIC DISCLOSURE, INTERNATIONAL CANALS, NSTRUCTIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, CAT-C
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 NOV 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ullricre
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE278125
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: SMBELL
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: P840093-1765
From: STATE SS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761156/aaaabwxx.tel
Line Count: 142
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: 76 PANAMA 7680, 76 PANAMA 7681
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ullricre
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <18 MAR 2004 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <08 NOV 2004 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <08 NOV 2004 by ullricre>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PANAMA BOMBINGS
TAGS: PFOR, PREL, PN, PQ, US, (TORRIJOS HERRERA, OMAR)
To: PANAMA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006